



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

Last week, the Tourism Sustainability Council (TSC) held its second meeting, making significant progress toward creating an implementation plan to educate and guide our industry on responsible sustainability efforts to preserve our treasured destinations.

Organized by AOT, the Council is comprised of business, education, tourism, water and land conservation and public leaders, representing some of the best thinking in the area of sustainability.

The meeting focused on reviewing best sustainability practices in other states and at a national level. Discussions also centered on Arizona's Smart Growth Card initiative and how the Council can work in conjunction with this project.

For details about the meeting, please read the ***AOT News Flash*** section below.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Tourism Sustainability Councils Takes Steps toward Goals

The Tourism Sustainability Council (TSC) met last week and focused on reviewing best sustainability practices in other states and at a national level. The Council agreed to proceed with a “benchmark” survey to find out what sustainability efforts the Arizona tourism industry is already doing so that there is a comparisons to future efforts and progression. TSC also agreed to do a resident and visitor perception study to see how people view Arizona in terms of sustainability.

Discussions also centered on how TSC can work with the Smart Growth Scorecard initiative. Developed by the Governor’s Growth Cabinet, the Scorecard is a tool that provides Arizona communities with a clear, usable means of evaluating how well-prepared they are for growth and development issues. By January, the Smart Growth Scorecard will be integrated into AOT’s program of work, including the agency’s grant programs. Smart Growth is a continuous planning process to guide the preservation, development, or redevelopment of a neighborhood, community, or region to promote the goals and ambitions of its residents.

For more information on the Smart Growth initiative, please visit www.azcommerce.com/SmartGrowth/.

For more information on the TSC meeting, contact Laura French at 602-364-3720 or via e-mail at lfrench@azot.gov.

Advertising Updates Now Available on AZOT.gov!

AOT’s FY09 advertising campaign information, including media plans, is now available on www.azot.gov. For details on the agency’s National, Target Cities, Canada, and Mexico campaigns, please visit the [Advertising](#) section of the Web site.

For more information, contact Elysia Labita at 602-364-3705 or via e-mail at elabita@azot.gov.

Trippin’ with AOT

Brochure Distribution Opportunity: ADAC Consumer Travel Show, Germany

AOT will be participating in a leading consumer show near Stuttgart, Germany, on November 30. The one-day event is being organized by ADAC, which is the German Automobile Club (similar to AAA). ADAC also runs travel agents throughout Germany. Fourteen of its area travel agencies will be on hand to distribute materials and provide information. An estimated 1,000 visitors are expected to attend the event.

There is no participation fee (only shipping costs), but space is limited to **five** (5) exhibitors on a first come, first serve basis.

For more information, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at lbelonio@azot.gov.

Industry News

SAVE the DATE: 3rd Annual Arizona Tourism Safety and Security Conference

The third annual Arizona Tourism Safety & Security Conference will be held November 21 at the Hotel Valley Ho in Scottsdale. The focus of the event is to explore the ways in which safety and security effectively aid the economic benefits to an attraction. It will also openly discuss the dangers of eliminating safety concerns out of the budget in the name of fiscal necessity.

Conference information is list below:

Where: Hotel Valley Ho, 6850 East Main Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85251, 480-248-2000

Registration & Information: <http://mtrc.asu.edu/portal/aztss>

Questions: mtrc@asu.edu or 602-496-1191

More Conference Information: <http://mtrc.asu.edu/portal/aztss>

Speakers and Sessions: <http://mtrc.asu.edu/portal/aztss-sessioninfo>

Promotional E-mail: http://webstage.pp.asu.edu/zope/mtrc_valleyho/index.html

TIA Prepares for TBR Merger

The Travel Business Roundtable, the political advocacy group of CEOs and other senior executives representing more than 50 travel organizations, last week approved a year-end merger with the Travel Industry Association. TBR has been working since 2005 through a formal strategic partnership with TIA, which plans to re-brand itself following the merger as the U.S. Travel Association.

Over the past decade, the TBR's agenda has been largely focused on how to welcome more international visitors to the U.S., said Geoff Freeman, TIA senior vice president of public affairs. He said the group's focus now also would encompass domestic challenges, "including concerns about the economy and concerns about business travel, including what can be done to encourage businesses, whether through legislation or public relations activity, to continue to travel for business meetings and conventions. That's a space we are working on to see how Congress can stimulate travel to stimulate the economy." TBR has been led for 11 of its 13 years by Loews Hotel Chairman and CEO Jonathan Tisch. (www.BusinessTravelNews.com, 10/30)

ATA Chief Says Airline Profits May Return in '09

Commercial airlines' economic troubles will improve during the fourth quarter, and the industry may even go into the black in 2009, the head of the Air Transport Association said Monday. James May, president and CEO of the ATA, said recent steps by U.S. airlines to cope with the high cost of jet fuel--from charging passengers for checked bags and other services that had been free to dramatic cutbacks in scheduled flights--have left carriers in an unexpectedly strong position to withstand the current economic turmoil, especially now that oil prices have dropped. "The good news is we are prepared," May told the Air Traffic Control Association's annual conference. "The net result is I think we're going to see a reasonably positive fourth quarter this year for commercial aviation and the very real chance we'll be operating in the black" in 2009.

May predicted more strategic alliances among U.S. and European airlines such as the partnership proposed by American Airlines and British Airways. The airlines are seeking antitrust immunity for the deal, which would let them work together on pricing and scheduling for trans-Atlantic flights. May also predicted significant consolidation among European airlines, but no further mergers of domestic carriers, like Delta's acquisition of Northwest Airlines. (AP;

www.AtlantaJournal-Constitution.com/Business/)

Travel Industry Responds to Election

Leaders of the travel and tourism sector of the national economy will convene to draft ideas and prepare recommendations to encourage President-elect Barack Obama to accelerate the economy through travel and tourism. The outcomes will be presented to Obama, his transition team and key members of Congress following a meeting convened by the National Tour Association in Washington on Dec. 16. NTA said a broad cross-section of industry leaders has been invited to take part in developing workable solutions for the struggling economy.

To date, more than 20 organizations have confirmed their participation, including representatives of packaged travel, lodging, travel agents, cruise lines, ground transportation, airlines and special interest travel, according to NTA, which is managing the effort. "We believe it is critical to equip President-elect Obama and his administration with the ways in which travel can fuel the U.S. economy," said NTA President Lisa Simon. Details at 859-226-4418. (*Special to TA*)

Aviation Industry Pushing Ahead with Green Agenda

International passenger traffic slowed to a five-year low in July and sagged further in August, but the International Air Transport Association and its 230 member-airlines feel compelled to push ahead with their Green Vision reports [The Vancouver Sun](#). First sky-high fuel prices and fare surcharges staggered the airline industry. Now it's caught up in the global credit-market meltdown and the threat of world recession. About 30 airlines have gone under and 20 more are at risk of failure as travel demand wanes, says IATA CEO Giovanni Bisignani. Airlines are cutting jobs and grounding aircraft to counter a 30 per cent rise in jet fuel. They're expected to post a collective \$5.2-billion US loss this year. But the race for fuel-cost savings and better environmental performance without compromising safety and security is as urgent as ever, says Gunther Matschnigg, IATA's senior vice-president for safety, operations and infrastructure. Biofuels are a key part of the future. The airline industry is fingered as a global-warming culprit, but IATA says aviation is a small part of the big problem of climate change, accounting for two per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions. But its carbon footprint is growing, and shock treatment is needed.

The Future of American Travel

Travel in 2007 was marked by high gas prices, new passport rules, record lows for the dollar, and record-high air travel. Experts say, Americans may take shorter trips or choose destinations closer to home where their dollar goes further. But they will still travel says [TravelMole](#). The Conference Board's most recent consumer survey found 45.8 percent of Americans intend to take a vacation within six months, down just a tad from 46.4 percent a year ago. "When there's a slowdown in the economy, travel only slows slightly," said Douglas Shifflet of D.K. Shifflet & Associates, which tracks travel trends. "The amount of time people spend on vacations and in hotels is hit harder. They make tradeoffs; they stay closer to home or with friends and relatives." "They'll look for other ways to save, like taking a day or two off of their trip," agreed Amy Ziff, Travelocity editor-at-large. International hot spots for '08 include Beijing; Central America; Italy, Eastern Europe and Lisbon, Portugal. But domestic travel could benefit from the weak dollar and other trends. Visits to national parks were up 1.3 percent, January-September 2007, compared with the previous year, with Yosemite and Yellowstone adding more than a quarter-million visitors. Lonely Planet, the guidebook publisher, picked the U.S. as its No. 1 destination for 2008. "The euro has made it expensive for U.S. travelers to take their European dream vacation, so they're looking at their own backyard paradise, with holidays that include national parks and Hawaii," said Lonely Planet spokeswoman Christina Tunnah. "I think we'll see an increase in

domestic travel and people looking for really good deals - for example, places where they can stay four nights and get a fifth night free," said Ziff.

AABBI Launches New Web Site for 2008 Conference and Trade Show

The Arizona Association of Bed and Breakfast Inns will be holding its 20th Conference and Trade show December 2-4 in Downtown Chandler at the San Marcos Resort. The group has launched a Web site, www.aabbicts.com, for attendees to find information including the conference agenda, educational sessions, dinners and events, vendors, sponsors and more.